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THE PRESENT TRUTH



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WHAT IS THIS PERIODICAL ABOUT

FROM PUBLISHERS

We gladly present to the world the first number of our periodical "THE PRESENT TRUTH". This periodical is not only devoted to the exposition of the Scriptures in general, but, as its name indicates, to certain great Bible truths of intense interest and special application at the present time. Among these great

The subjects to which we pay attention are of the utmost importance; they merit the most serious examination. God has spoken plainly concerning these things. His Word contains many testimonies confirming the doctrines which we present to you. If it is true that the coming of Christ is at hand, that the last judgment is just before us, it is of

To him who has an obedient heart, the truth of God is more precious than fine gold. We do not teach that men may be saved by simply believing in Bible doctrines. All have sinned before God and come short of His glory. The only remedy for sin is in the blood of Jesus. This remedy does not save mankind in sin, but from sin. Every man must make an application of the merits of this blood to his own soul by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The repentance that is

compare all the passages of Scripture which seem to teach that doctrine. When figures and symbols are used, they are explained either by the context or other portions of the Bible. A true interpretation can only be arrived at by comparing all the scriptures which apply to the subject; and the interpretation which most naturally follows such a comparison will be the correct one.

To the subjects which will appear in these columns, we invite the serious attention of everyone. We



truths are the chains of prophecy, reaching down to the end of time; the signs of the soon coming of Christ; the proclamation of the hour of God's judgment; the sanctuary of the Bible, and its ministration; the fall of Babylon; the return of our Lord in the clouds of heaven; the resurrection of the dead; the events of the day of judgment; the creation of the new heavens and earth; the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God; the perpetuity, the authority, and the holiness of the commandments of God; the faith of Jesus; and, finally, the preparation of heart and character formation that are necessary to receive the boon of immortality at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These great doctrines are present truth. And by present truth, we do not mean new truth, but truth which has a special application at the present time, and which calls for a special faith on the part of the people of God.

the greatest importance that it should be made known to the human race. If there are those who are not keeping all of the commandments of God, and the ordinances of the Church of Christ in their purity, as commanded in the Bible, it is certainly the duty of the servants of God to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show the people their sins. Those who sincerely desire to walk with God and do his will, will hail with joy the light which is sent of God to direct them.

The remarks, described above, indicate the nature of the work that we seek to perform by the publication of this periodical. And right here we wish to say that this paper is neither owned nor controlled by any individual. Its publication will in no way advance the pecuniary interests of any. It is published by a religious society, whose only object in its issue is to lead souls to the truth of God's Word.

acceptable to God leads man to forsake sin; and true faith in Christ The repentance that is acceptable to God leads man to forsake sin; and true faith in Christ will be made manifest by good works. True faith will lead men to obey the holy commandments of God.

Our only rule of faith is the Bible. In that is our creed. If we do not bring the clear testimony of God's Word in supporting of the doctrines we teach, we ask no one to believe. God gave the Bible, not to befog our minds, but to instruct us in the way of righteousness and life. Those who examine it with care will find that it is its own best interpreter. It will prove a lamp to the feet and a light to the path of all who with honesty of purpose and sincerity of motive diligently seek to know what God would have them do. When we wish to know what the Bible teaches concerning a certain doctrine, it is needful to bring together and

ask those who love the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to examine the evidences of its nearness. We request those who love and fear God to consider their duty as regards His commandments. We beseech those who desire a home in the kingdom of God to seek to know the means whereby it can be obtained. We entreat those who are walking in rebellion against God to become reconciled to him through our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope for the aid and co-operation of those who love these great truths.

Our prayer is that this periodical may be an honored instrument in the providence of God in bringing many souls to Christ and life. To this end we pray that God may give us His Holy Spirit, without which our work shall prove a failure, to direct and inspire us in the accomplishment of this great object.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"



SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

E. G. White,
The Present Truth, №1-1884

It is the duty of every Christian to seek a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. The importance of this can hardly be overestimated. "Given by inspiration of God," "able to make us wise unto salvation," "rendering" the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:15-17), the Book of books has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We must not be satisfied with superficial knowledge, but must seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, and to drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.

To read a certain number of chapters daily, or learn by heart a stipulated amount without a thorough deepening in the meaning of the sacred text, is a work of little profit. We cannot obtain wisdom without earnest attention and prayerful study. Some portions of Scripture are, indeed, too clear to be misunderstood; but there are others whose meaning does not lie upon the surface, to be seen at a glance. Scripture must be compared with scripture; there must be careful research and patient reflection. And such study will be richly awarded. As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will they who perseveringly search the word of God as for hid treasure, find truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker.

No effort should be spared to establish a right habit of study. If the mind wanders, bring it back. If the intellectual and moral taste has been perverted by the over-wrought and exciting tales of fiction, so that you are disinclined to apply yourself to the diligent study of God's word, then you have a battle to fight with yourself to overcome this depraved habit. A love for fictitious reading should be broken up at once. Rigid rules should be enforced to hold the mind in a proper channel. The pernicious practice of story reading is one of the means used by Satan to destroy souls. The mind that is occupied with exciting stories, loses all relish for solid reading that would improve the memory and strengthen the intellect.

I am acquainted with many sad examples of the evil effects of this harmful practice. In their youth, the people of whom I speak had well-balanced minds. God had endowed

them with extraordinary mental powers. But they took up the reading of romance, and the more they indulged the appetite for this food, the greater was the demand. The imagination constantly craved its accustomed stimulus, as the drunkard longs for 'his wine or tobacco'. Their mental and moral powers were weakened and perverted. They lost their interest in the Scriptures, and their relish for prayer; and they were as truly ruined, mentally and spiritually, as a drunkard or a smoker. Novel-readers are mentally intoxicated; and they need to sign a pledge of total abstinence as verily as a victim of any other form of intemperance.

Another source of danger, against which we should be constantly on our guard, is the reading of atheistic authors. Such works are inspired by Satan, and no one can read them without loss to the soul. It is true that some who are affected by them may finally recover; but all who tamper in the least with their foul influence, place themselves on Satan's ground, and he makes the most of his advantage. As they invite his temptations, they have no wisdom to discern or strength to resist them. With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbelief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the mind. To harbor their suggestions is like recklessly taking to your bosom a serpent whose sting is always poisonous and often fatal.

We are surrounded by unbelief. The very atmosphere seems charged with it; we can resist its power only by constant effort. Those who value their soul's salvation, should shun unfaithful writings as they would shun the leprosy. Dear youth, be careful what you read. While the mind is directed into hurtful channels by an improper course of reading, it is impossible for you to make the truth of God the subject of constant reflection. If there was ever a time when knowledge of the Scriptures was more important than at any other period, that time is the present. I appeal to young and old: Make the word of God your textbook. Here you will find the true standard of character. Here you may learn what it is to be a Christian in the true acceptance of the term.

The Sabbath School gives parents and children a precious opportunity for the study of God's

word. But in order to gain that benefit which they should gain in the Sabbath School, both parents and children should devote time to study of the lessons, seeking to obtain a thorough knowledge of the facts presented, and also of the spiritual truths which these facts are designed to teach. We should especially convince young people of the importance of seeking the full significance of the scripture under consideration. Parents, set apart a little time each day for the study of the Sabbath School lesson with your children. Give up the worldly affairs if it's necessary, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to the precious lessons of sacred history. Parents as well as children will receive benefit from this study. Let the most important passages of Scripture connected with the lesson be memorized, not as a task, but as a privilege. Though at first the memory may be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the precious words of truth; and the habit will prove the most valuable aid to religious growth.

If the time that is worse than wasted in gossip, in ministering to pride, or for the gratification of appetite, were devoted with equal interest to the study of the Bible, what encouragement would be given to our Sabbath Schools. But when parents are more anxious to have their children fashionably dressed than to have their minds stored with the truths of God's word, the children themselves will soon learn to regard dress and display more important than the things which concern their salvation.

Parents, you have an important and solemn responsibility. Make it your life-work to form the characters of your children according to the divine Pattern. If they ever possess the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, it will be because you perseveringly trained them to love the teachings of God's word, and to seek the approval of Jesus above the approbation of the world.

Follow the system in the study of the Scriptures in your families.

All over the field of revelation are scattered the glad springs of heavenly truth, and peace, and joy. They are within the reach of every seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as

streams flowing from the river of the water of life. Our Savior prayed that the minds of the disciples might be opened to understand the Scriptures. And whenever we study the Bible with a prayerful heart, the Holy Spirit is near to open to us the meaning of the words we read.

Let the youth be taught to love the study of the Bible. Let the first place in our thoughts and affections be given to the Book of books; for it contains knowledge which we need above all other. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10).

Let's seek to be thoroughly prepared for every good work. Let's put forth earnest efforts to draw near to God, that His angels may be near to protect and bless us. Thus we will gain the victory over the power of Satan, and finally receive the crown of glory, honor, and immortality.

THE WAYS AND WORKS OF GOD HARMONIOUS

R. P. COTTRELL,
The Present Truth, №1-1884

The ways of God are perfect; they need no fixing. "The law of the Lord is perfect". That which is perfect cannot be improved; therefore, no revision has ever been necessary and will ever be necessary. "Thy word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever". "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth" (Psalms 119).

The primary law of God — the moral law — and all the principles of His dealings with mankind have been the same from the very beginning. His plan of action has not been improved, because His wisdom cannot be improved. It is true that when sin is disposed of, so that it exists no longer, He has promised to make all things new; but that relates to our earth, which now lies under the curse because of sin; and this is in accordance with all His actions from the very beginning. The time has never been, in the working out of His plan, that He has abandoned one principle of action, changed one precept of His primary law, or laid these all aside in order to begin anew. And yet people talk as though they

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thought that God had demolished all the past, and started working on a new plan, with a new law to replace the old one; and they quote this text: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

But this text is found on the word "if", — "if any man be in Christ" (text 17). The change is all in him; "he is a new creature"; his old life of sin has passed away, and he enters upon a new life, — a life of obedience to the law of God. This is all that the text teaches. The apostle did not teach that if a man is in Christ, the law of God is abolished to him. If he did, what is the case of the man who is not in Christ? Is the old law abolished to him too? Or is he still bound to keep it?

God says, "I change not" (Malachi 3:6); and every consistent believer in the God of the Bible must perceive that God always acts upon the same principles, — that the law by which He governs mankind is always the same, and consequently that the very same acts that were sins at one time, are sins

at all times. Neither old principle nor precept of moral law has been abolished or changed, and no new principle has been introduced.

All the ways of God are harmonious. His plan goes constantly forward. He does not pull down to build greater. He does not improve the original plan; for it was perfect, and therefore cannot be improved. The Father and the Son have ever been one. The law of the one is the law of the other; no changes have been in the administration. The Son has not superseded the Father; neither has the New Testament superseded the Old One; but there is harmony throughout. The whole building of God is upon one foundation, — the foundation which was laid in the beginning and it will never be removed. Those who build their hopes upon this foundation will build securely. Those who build upon any other, will find that the storms and floods which are about to come will sweep them away. Let all be built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. Those who hear and do the sayings of Christ, as set forth in the sermon upon the mount, build upon the rock; those who do not do them, build upon the sand. Soon everyone's work will be tested.

THE MILLENNIUM

The Present Truth, Nº1-1884



Many believe that the Bible says about some happy period of time — "gold century" — that has to be before the Christ's coming

"MILLENNIUM" simply means a thousand years; but the term is almost invariably applied to the thousand years of the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, during which time the faithful saints will reign with Christ. Upon this reign, Satan has built one of the most delusive errors that he has ever palmed off upon credulous, unbelieving humanity, — credulous to imbibe pleasing error; unbelieving as regards testing truth. Whenever we preach that Jesus is soon coming, we are met by the remark, "That cannot be; for the world is yet to be converted, and there is to be a reign of righteousness and peace for a thousand years before he comes."

The doctrine is a pleasing one. It lulls to ease and security. But, dear reader, however pleasing it may be, if it be not true, we do not want it for part of our faith. What does the Bible teach concerning this? Is the world to be converted? Are all people to turn to the Lord? Is the great flood of sin and vice and crime and oppression and fraud and intemperance and suffering and death, to roll back its waves before our Lord shall come? Will mortal man partake of the blessings of that hallowed state? We would that it might be so. We should rejoice if we knew that all the world would, in the near future, turn to the Lord with all the heart. We should be glad to believe it, if it were true; but, if it is not true, it will mislead us, and we shall be deceived at last. Truth is better than error, though it be unpleasant to the carnal heart, or involve a cross.

We believe the doctrine of the so-called temporal millennium, or world's conversion prior to the second advent of Christ, to be an error. We cannot accept it for the following reasons:

1. It was not the design of the gospel to convert all people, but to "take out of them a people for his name" (Acts 15:14). So the gospel is not to convert every creature; but is to be preached "for a witness" that all who will may reap of its benefits, and all who reject it may be without excuse (Matt. 24:14). This has been the case in all the generations past. The gospel has gone forth testifying the "good tidings," and warning people to flee from the wrath to come. Some have heeded its merciful warning, and have come out from the world; others have turned a deaf ear, and gone down without hope. And if the holy prophets and apostles with their mighty works and great power, if the church in its state of primitive purity and obedience, could not bring the world to Christ, what can be hoped from the professed church at the present time? Does not the prospect, candid reader, look darker and more hopeless?

2. The little horn, or the Papacy, exists, and wars against the saints till Christ comes in glory (Dan. 7:11,21,22). The Roman church will always remain a foe to true religion till it is destroyed by the presence of Christ (2 Thess. 2:2-7). Would it be possible for the world to be converted with this power still corrupting and opposing the religion of the Bible?

3. The lot of the people of God in all ages has been to suffer persecution and tribulation. Abel died a martyr, and from that time to the present, Satan has ceased not his work of persecution. It has been lighter at some periods than others, but whenever a reform has been in progress, then has the enemy of all righteousness brought persecution against the church of God. Says the inspired apostle, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer

persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Another inspired writer declares that there will be special persecution in the last days: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17). Satan will work at that time with great power (2 Thess. 2:9,10). There will arise scoffers who will mock the people of God, and ridicule the coming of Christ (2 Pet. 3:3,4).

4. The last days are to be as were the days of Noah and Lot. The great mass in those days were seeking the world with all its allurements. They rejected the solemn messages borne them by Noah and Lot, and were lost. A few — only Noah and his family at the time of the flood, only Lot and his two daughters at the destruction of Sodom — believed and were saved. Our Savior declares, "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30). Certainly this could not be, if the world were to be converted.

5. The way to life is a narrow way, and the way to destruction broad. Jesus says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13,14). Will these conditions ever cease to be? Will the time come when the broad way leads to life, and the narrow to death? Or, will both ways merge into one, in which all will walk? This must be so, if the theory of the world's conversion is true; yet there is not the slightest intimation of it in God's Word.

6. The last days are said to be full of special peril. This could not be

the case if all people served God. Read what the apostle says: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:1-4). Here are eighteen different sins which will be prevalent in the last days, and, sad to say, will be possessed by those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (Verse 5). From such we are warned to turn away. These sins and examples, and the power of Satan will be such that, if possible, they will deceive the very elect (Matt. 24:24). Certainly, this state of things does not argue well for the world's conversion.

7. The wicked and righteous continue together till the end of the age, or second advent of the Messiah. Our Savior illustrates this by the parable of the wheat and tares, as recorded in Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43. Jesus says that the tares are children of the wicked one, or sinners; the wheat represents the righteous. Both grow together till the time of the harvest. "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (Verse 39). This is positive testimony that the conversion of the world is an impossibility.

8. The preaching of the Millennium, or conversion of the world, by so many in different parts is one of the signs of the end (Isa. 2:2-5; Micah 4:1-5). Both of these predictions are similar, and couched in almost the same language. The prophecy points to a time when the Christian religion, and Christian nations

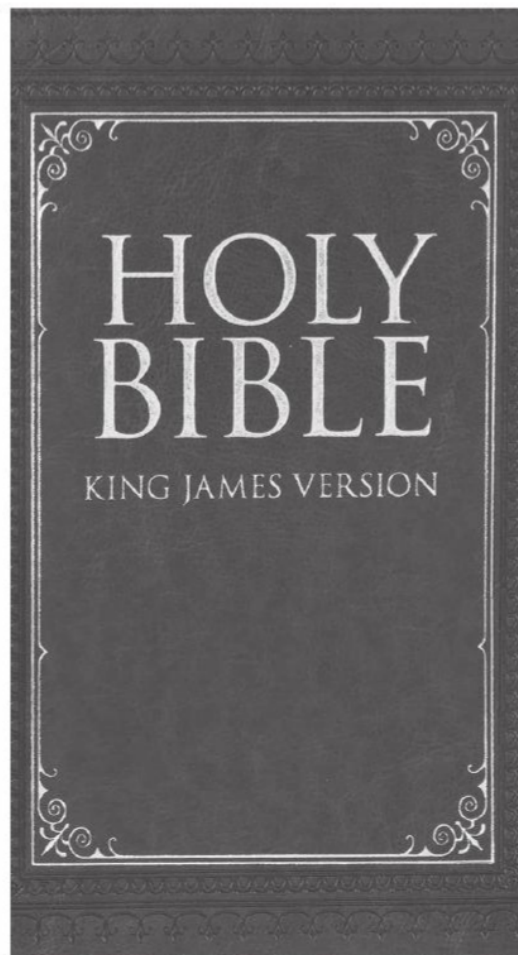
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will become nominally popular. Because of this, "Many people shall go and say," says Isaiah; "Many nations shall come and say," says Micah, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob... And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."

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The foregoing testimonies from God's word are plain and positive; there is no way to evade the force of them. While it is true that there will be a reign of righteousness and peace, it is not true that it is to occur before the Lord comes. Then, and not till then, will the course of sin be checked. Then, and not till then, will the earth be "full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea". Then, iniquity will be brought to light, the faithful will be rewarded; the afflicted, tempest-tossed child of God will be comforted. Then "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads".

The above are some of the reasons why we cannot believe this doctrine of the world's conversion. It leads people to become careless, put afar of the second coming of Christ, and thus neglect to prepare for that event. Upon those who are deceived by it, will come sudden destruction; but to those who are faithfully watching and preparing for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, will come life for evermore.



THE STANDARD

The Present Truth, №1-1884

Is THE Bible our standard of faith and practice? Are we to judge our religious state by the accordance of our experience and practice with its teachings? The whole Protestant Church says so. Whatever they divide upon, they are united in this, that the word of God is the supreme law of human action. Here they meet upon common ground. And this is the true view of the case. If the Bible is of any authority, it is of the highest authority. By this Word we must be judged on the last day, and by this Word we should prove ourselves. The great tendency is to ignore the teaching of the Bible. And it requires watchfulness and energy to resist the common tendency. In a rapid stream they who would not be borne down by the current must row hard, and constantly. Preaching by explaining and enforcing the word of God, has well-nigh gone out of fashion. The text is generally taken from the Bible, though some modern preachers base their Sunday evening discourses upon popular proverbs, slang phrases, or quotations from Shakespeare. But from whatever source the text is taken, the main body of the sermon is made from the sayings of men, or from the periodical literature of the day. We have a great deal of preaching for the times, we need preaching for eternity. Preachers are demanded who can "speak with authority, and not as the scribes" who read pleasant essays that lull their listeners into a feeling of false security.

THE UNCHANGEABLE LAW

R. F. COTTRELL,
The Present Truth, №2-1884

People are reasonable enough to teach anyone who has any just conception of the true and eternal God, that the requirements of His moral law must be as unchangeable as Himself. The principles of His government must be in harmony with His eternal attributes, and, therefore, must be ever the same. Love to God and love to our neighbors must ever hold the same claim upon people of all ages. The ten commandments explain and enforce these two great principles; consequently everything opposed to these principles is expressly forbidden. But the observance of negative precepts merely, can never satisfy the just claims of God. There must be something by which we can manifest, by our action, our loyalty to God. The Sabbath commandment is the only one of the ten which truly tests our allegiance to God. The keeping holy of the memorial of the

creation is an acknowledgment of the Creator. This is not true of any one of the other nine.

Reason teaches that the law of God must ever be the same. Revelation teaches the same, "the law of the Lord is perfect." That which is perfect cannot be improved. Jesus said concerning the written law, extant in His time, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." (Matt. 5:18). The apostles teach in harmony with this, and all the Scriptures agree with the declaration of God: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." (Psalms 89:34).

But multitudes of professed believers teach that the law which came from the lips of the great Lawgiver at Sinai, has been abolished; others say changed. Why do they teach this? Everyone who will reflect upon it will see that the only reason for this is on account of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. No fault is found with any other. Now is it not exceedingly marvelous that the Sabbath, concerning which we have the positive declaration of the Spirit that it will be observed by all the



people in the world to come, furnishes the only pretext for the abolition of the other nine moral precepts in the present world? The testimony alluded to is this: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 66:22,23).

It would be preposterously absurd to believe that any one of the other nine will be violated in that "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness;" but it is a remarkable fact that the rejected commandment is the only one of the ten the observance of which, in the world to come, is expressly foretold in prophecy.

"HERE are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus"—Bible (Rev. 14:12)

SIN

Youth's Magazine, №3-1884



SIN is a deceiving as well as a hardening thing. It offers pleasure, but hides the pain which will follow; it points the thirsty to water apparently pure, and when they drink, stirs up the poisonous dregs which lie beneath; it leads to fruits and flowers, which in the taking, prove but ashes, and rottenness, and bitterness; it discovers paths enriched with all the delights of enchantment, but

it discovers paths enriched with all the delights of enchantment, but conceals the termination — "the chambers of death:" under the pretext of refreshment, it will offer a bowl, sparkling to the eye, and pleasant to the taste, but which is found to be intermingled with remorse, vexation, and despair. If youth would leave its enticing paths, it holds out future hopes of sensual enjoyment in its possession, and allures them to maturer years; at this step of life it again allures onward till riper age — ever promising a time for repentance — but to crown all, tells the tottering victim, on whom time has nearly done his work, and death is about to finish it, that it is "too late," and the greedy grave opens for the deceived sinner! Well, the apostle might write, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

...and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John. 8:32)

BIBLE SANCTIFICATION Nº 1

E. G. WHITE, The Present Truth Nº1-1884



THE sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being, — spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of the entire consecration. Paul prays that the church at Thessalonica may enjoy this great blessing. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:23).

In the religious world there is a theory of sanctification which is false in itself, and dangerous in its influence. In many cases, those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine one. Their sanctification consists in talk and will-worship. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly they will discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply they will feel their own defects.

When people claim that they are sanctified, they give sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ without having true knowledge of Him. The greater the distance between them and their Savior, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes.

While with penitence and humble trust we reflect on Jesus, Whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in His footsteps. By beholding Him we become changed into His divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we will claim no righteousness of our own, but will exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon His merits.

Our Savior always condemned self-righteousness. He taught His disciples that the highest type of religion is that which manifests itself in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. He cautioned them to perform their deeds of charity quietly; not for display, not to be praised or honored by men, but for the glory of God, expecting their reward hereafter. If they performed good deeds to be lauded by men, no reward would be given them by their Father in heaven.

The followers of Christ were instructed not to pray for the purpose of being heard of men. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. 6:6). Such expressions as this from the lips of Christ show that He did not approve of the kind of piety so prevalent among the Pharisees. His teachings upon the mount show that deeds of benevolence assume a noble form, and acts of religious worship shed the most precious fragrance, when performed in an unpretending manner, in penitence and humility. The pure motive sanctifies the act.

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They are not bigoted or self-righteous; but they are jealous of self, ever fearing, lest a promise left to them, will not be in vain.

Many who profess sanctification are entirely ignorant of the work of grace upon the heart. Having been proved and tested, they are found to be like the self-righteous Pharisee. They will bear no contradiction. They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their

claims to sanctification upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. They are stubborn and perverse in urging their tenacious claims of holiness, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified people are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, "God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!" Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend.

BUT IT IS THAT WHICH IS TOGETHER UNLIKE CHRIST, THE ONLY TRUE PATTERN.

Bible sanctification does not consist of strong emotion. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life lasts. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful.

There are those claiming sanctification who make a profession of the truth, like their brethren, and it may be difficult to make a distinction between them; but the difference exists, nevertheless. The testimony of those claiming such an exalted experience will cause the sweet spirit of Christ to withdraw from a meeting, and will leave a chilling influence upon those

present, while if they were truly living without sin, their very presence would bring holy angels into the assembly, and their words would indeed be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Proverbs 25:11)

In summer, as we look upon the trees of the distant forest, all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not be able to distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as winter approaches, and frost encloses them in its icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens are readily discerned. Thus it will be with all who are walking in humility, distrustful of self, but clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. While those who are self-confident, and trust in their own perfection of character, lose their false robe of righteousness when subjected to the storms of trial, the truly righteous, who sincerely love and fear God, wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in prosperity and adversity alike.

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him Who sees the secrets of the heart, notices and approves every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires testing time to reveal the pure gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of Christ's true followers are developed.

THE SECOND ADVENT

JAMES WHITE, The Present Truth Nº2-1884



Text: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3).

JESUS was soon to leave His disciples, and ascend to the Father. And in His words of instruction and consolation, He was preparing their minds for that event which would prove a great grief to them. His presence constituted their joy. His absence would be their sorrow. "Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." (Matt. 9:15). The real friends of our Lord will ever desire His tangible presence. A worldly church, whose affections are placed upon the things of this life, will enjoy His absence. Those who truly love their divine Lord will receive the word relative to His return with all gladness. Our Lord was tenderly introducing to His disciples the subject of His ascent to heaven. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you" (John 13:33). "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." (Verse 36). This statement caused distress and consternation in the minds of the disciples, and made Peter say to His Lord, "Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." (Verse 37). Then the comforting words of the text follow, assuring the sorrowing disciples that their Lord would come again, and receive them to Himself.

Jesus also assured them that the Father would give them "another comforter," even the Spirit of truth, which will dwell with them, and be in them. (Chap. 14:16,17). The words "another comforter," suppose two at

least. The one was the person of our divine Lord. The other is the Spirit of truth. Both were comforters of the church. Christ was such in a special sense while He was with His disciples. The other was to abide with the church to administer the blessings and gifts of the Holy Spirit to the church, until her absent Lord would return in glory to take her to Himself. Then the days of her mourning, and fasting, and griefs, will be over forever. With such faith and hope, the waiting church of Jesus Christ may sing: — "How bright the vision! Oh, how long Shall this glad hour delay? Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time, And bring the welcome day.

THE CERTAINTY OF THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST, AND THE MANNER AND OBJECT OF HIS COMING, ARE POINTS OF THRILLING INTEREST TO ALL WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

And while the church waits in joyous expectation of speedy deliverance, her Lord says, "Surely I come quickly," to which the church responds, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20,21).

The certainty of the second advent of Christ, and the manner and object of His coming, are points of thrilling interest to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

He will appear the second time. Paul speaks directly upon this point, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28). Again He says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13).

Another apostle testifies to this point thus: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2). The second

advent of Christ will be personal and visible. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." (Rev. 1:7). Jesus, as He was addressing His disciples upon the subject of His second advent, pointed forward to the generation who would witness the signs of that event in the sun, moon, and stars, and said: "They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30.) See Mark 13:26; 14:62; John 14:3. And at the ascension of Christ, two angels declared to the anxious witnesses: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11).

The apostle testifies to the personal and visible appearing of Christ in language that cannot be misunderstood. He says: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (1 Thess. 4:16). See also Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2.

When the Lord will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, sinners then living will be destroyed, and the earth will be desolated. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2:7,8). See also Matt. 13:26-30, 37-43; 3:12; Luke 17:26-30; Isa. 13:9; 24:1-9; 34:1-15; Jer. 4:20,27; Zeph. 1:2,3,7-18.

When Christ appears the second time, the dead righteous will

be raised, and the living righteous will be changed to immortality. "Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15:51-53). Again the apostle testifies to this point: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes. 4:16,17).

Then the church will be no more separated from her adorable Redeemer; but, with all the endowments of immortality, will "ever be with the Lord." The apostle states that they will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Will they return to the earth immediately? Or will the Lord lead them up to the eternal city of the saved?

Jesus had plainly told His disciples that He would leave them. "Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward." (John 13:36). Jesus was soon to go up to the Father. The disciples could not follow their Lord then; but afterward, at the time of His second advent and the resurrection of the just, they should follow Him up to heaven, as He should return to His Father.

The disciples were pained to learn that their Lord would leave them. And He would comfort their troubled hearts by saying to them, "In my Father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will come again, and receive

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you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-13).

It is true that the earth will be made new, (Rev. 21:5), when the holy city will come down from heaven upon it, verse 2, there will be the final inheritance of the righteous. But Peter, with faith and hope inspired anew by the resurrection of Christ, points to heaven as the place where the inheritance is reserved, and says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. 1:3-5). In this case, the apostle refers only to the holy city, the capital of the complete inheritance. The redeemed will remain in the city above, and reign with their Lord in judgment, (Rev. 20:4), during the seventh millennium.

The doctrine of the second appearing of Christ has been held by the church ever since her Lord ascended to the Father to prepare mansions for her reception. It is the event that consummates her hopes, terminates the period of her toils and sorrows, and introduces her eternal repose. What sublime scenes will open then before the waiting children of God! The blazing heavens will reveal the Son of God in His glory, surrounded by all the holy angels. The trumpet will sound, and the just will come forth from the grave, immortal. And all — Redeemer and redeemed, attended by the heavenly host — will move upward to the mansions prepared for them in the Father's house.

To those who really love their absent Lord, the theme of His soon return to bestow immortality upon the dead and living righteous, is fraught with unspeakable blessedness. This event, with all its grand results, has always been the hope of the church. Paul could look over the long four thousand years, and speak of it thus: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13). And Peter exhorts: "Looking for and heating unto the coming of the day of God." (2 Pet. 3:12). And Paul again, after speaking of the descent of the Lord from heaven, the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and their ascent with the living righteous to meet the Lord in the air, says, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18).

The second coming of Christ is a subject of great importance to the church. We conclude thus from the amount of testimony relative to it, in connection with the resurrection of the just, and the judgment, contained both in the Old and New Testaments. Popular orthodoxy may cast it aside as not essential to the Christian faith, but it may be traced through the sacred Scriptures, as made prominent by prophets, Jesus, and apostles. The Bible dwells upon essentials. It does not deal in non-essentials. When the Lord in His word gave His people a rule of faith and practice, He cared about leaving the non-essentials all out. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," (2 Tim. 3:16), says Paul; "and let all the people say, Amen!"

The doctrine of the second appearing of Christ, made so very prominent in the Scriptures, is lost sight of by those who receive theories not found in the Scriptures. Thus the fulfillment of all the threatenings of God's word, relative to the swift approaching day of wrath, and the revelation of the Son of God in flaming fire, to destroy the inhabitants of the earth, as they were once destroyed by water, are put far into the distant future, if not completely lost sight of, by the unscriptural doctrine of the world's conversion and the temporal millennium.

The second personal appearing of Jesus Christ is most absurdly applied to several different things. Some teach that death is the second coming of Christ. This is not only a violation of plain Scripture

coming of Christ, that when they understood their Lord to intimate that John might remain until His return, they at once concluded that he would not die; and this saying went abroad from them. Instead of receiving the idea that the second advent of Christ, in any sense whatever, took place at death, they regarded it as an event that would forever put an end to the power of death over the righteous.

And what foggy theology this is that makes death the second appearing of Christ! He is coming as the Life-giver, and the believer's best friend. Death is the life-taker, and man's last enemy (1 Cor. 15:26). Christ is coming to give life to the just, and to destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil. (Heb. 2:14). Mark this: The devil has the power of death, and, in the

theologians should assert that death is the second coming of Christ.

Again, conversion is said to be the second coming of Christ. Then there are as many second comings of Christ as there are conversions. There can be only one second appearing of Jesus Christ. And, again, the manifestations of the Holy Spirit are said to be the second advent of Christ. Thus, people talk of the spiritual coming of Christ, and His spiritual reign for one thousand years. But here, also, they are involved in the difficulty of a plurality of second comings of Christ; for in this case they would have Christ appear at each gracious manifestation of the Holy Spirit. There can be a single second advent of Christ.

But moreover, those who talk of a spiritual coming and reign of Christ have things badly confused. May the Lord help them to see the difference between the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and the personal presence of Christ at His second appearing, while we appeal to the Scriptures. "I will pray the Father," says Jesus, "and he shall give you another Comforter." (John 14:16). This language implies more than one comforter. When Christ was with His people, He was their comforter. In His absence, the Father was to send another comforter, even the Spirit of truth. During the absence of the Son, the Holy Spirit was to be His representative, and the comforter of His dear, sorrowing people. The facts in the case are distinctly stated in the following impressive words: "But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16:5-8).

Mormons see the fulfillment of the prophecies relative to the coming and kingdom of Christ in the gathering of the "latter-day saints," at Salt Lake. And the Spiritualists generally agree in saying, Lo, here is the second advent of Christ in the manifestations of Spiritualism.

In the prophetic discourse of Matt. 24 and 25, covering the entire Christian age, our Lord, after speaking of the tribulation of the church under Papal persecutions, says of our time: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Iariats, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt. 24:23,24). The word then in this passage points to a specific period of time when "Lo, here is Christ, and lo, he is there," would be heard. Our Lord here describes the spiritual deceptions of the present age. False Christs arose not far from the first advent to deceive the Jews in regard to that event (Matt. 24:5); likewise false Christs and false prophets have arisen at this day to deceive the people on the subject of the second advent.

From this popular error of a temporal millennium and spiritual reign of Christ, have grown the mystical applications of the plainest declarations of Scripture relative to the second appearing of the Life-giver,



AND WHAT FOGGY THEOLOGY THIS IS THAT MAKES DEATH THE SECOND APPEARING OF CHRIST!

declarations, but of the laws of language. There can be a single second advent of Christ, while this misty sentiment has as many appearances of Jesus as there are deaths. The early disciples did not receive the idea that death was the second coming of Christ. Peter seeing the beloved John, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:21-23).

The disciples were so far from holding that death was the second

providence of God, is permitted to send the barbed arrow even to the heart of the just, lay him low in death, and lock him in the tomb. But the Life-giver, having passed under the dominion of death, and having been gloriously raised from the embrace of the grave, triumphantly says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades] and of death." (Rev. 1:18). The devil holds the power of death. Christ holds the keys of death and the grave, and at His second appearing He will unlock the 'tombs of the just, break the power of death, their last enemy, and lead them forth to immortal and eternal scenes of glory. It is astonishing that modern

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to death, to conversion, to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, to Shakerism, to Mormonism, and to Spiritualism.

How forcible the words of our Lord are when applied to the subject before us: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." (Matt. 24:23). No one needs fail to see who people are who are crying, "Lo, here is Christ, and lo, he is there!" The Lord continues, in verses 25 and 26: "Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." Here our Lord is dwelling upon what He has just before told them. His subject is still the teachings of those who cry, "Lo, here is Christ!" Or, if you hear proclaimed from the popular pulpits of our time, "Behold he is in the secret chambers," Christ's second coming is spiritual, at death, or at conversion, "believe it not." And why not receive such mystical teachings? The reason is given in the next verse: — "For as the lightning

cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24:27).

We are very happy that our Lord has pointed out false christs and false prophets, and has warned us against their mystical teachings, but He has in contrast set before us the manner of His second coming in the plainest terms. The vivid lightning flashing out of the distant east, and shining even to the west, lights up the whole heavens. What, then, when the Lord comes in flaming glory, and all the holy angels with Him? The presence of only one holy angel at the new sepulcher where Christ lay in death, caused the Roman guard to shake and become as dead men. The light and glory of one angel completely overpowered those strong sentinels. The Son of Man is coming in His own kingly glory, and in the glory of His Father, attended by all the holy angels. Then the whole heavens will blaze with glory, and the whole earth will tremble before Him.

CANDID THOUGHTS

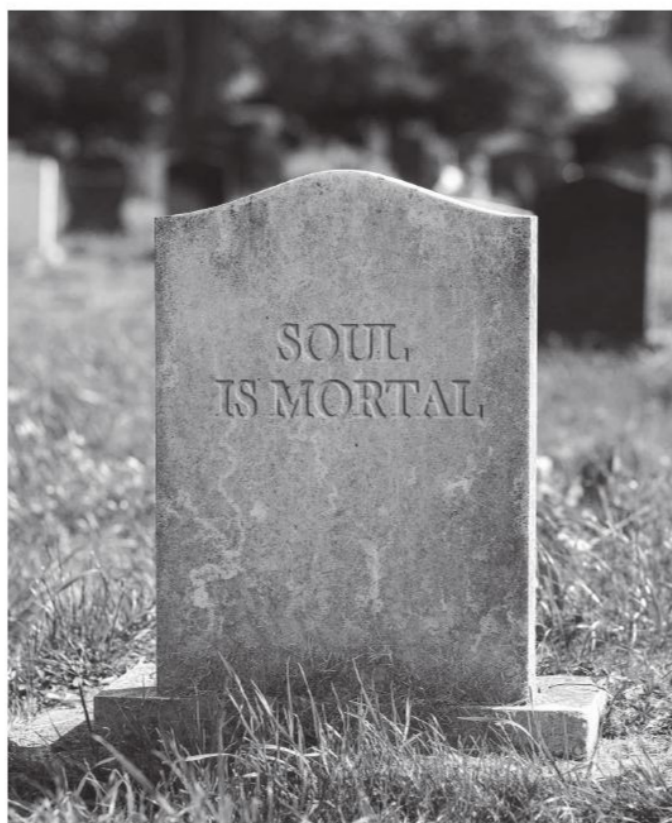
The Present Truth №2-1884

Only from the Scriptures we can obtain satisfactory information concerning the nature of the soul. Reason may lead us to conjecture, but reason by itself cannot give us confidence. The wise men of antiquity reasoned without the light of revelation, and remained in unhappy uncertainty. We are intended to seek light from the Scriptures, shining as a light in a dark place.

The first question that is presented to our mind will be, Is the soul of man a conscious and intelligent existence, when separated from the body, immortal in its nature, and destined to exist forever? Our object, in the brief thoughts on this subject, will not be to examine all the isolated passages which appear to present objections to the views we will present on this question; but to inquire what is the current testimony of Scripture; and this not so much to present all the evidence from the Scriptures that goes to support our views on this subject as to suggest trains of thought for others, as to what is truth on this subject.

1. We should not think that the soul of man is immortal, conscious, and intelligent existence, separate from the body, from the silence of the Scriptures on the subject. The Scriptures speak of the nature of man as plainly as they do of the nature of God; of its mortality, depravity, its perishing condition by nature — yet in this volume, written by prophets and apostles, recording the teachings of Christ, their own teaching and preaching to people of all classes and conditions — yet in all this volume, composed by so many writers, under so many different circumstances, and discussing so many subjects, the soul's immortality is never stated as a fact, plainly and explicitly, nor the subject discussed. This seems even more strange to suppose that the writers believed the doctrine, from the fact that religious teachers in our day who believe the doctrine often discuss the subject. They speak of the soul's immortality in most of their sermons and exhortations, so that no one who hears them, or reads their writings is in the least doubt as to their real sentiments on the subject.

2. We should not infer the doctrine of the soul's immortality



IS THE SOUL OF MAN A CONSCIOUS AND INTELLIGENT EXISTENCE, WHEN SEPARATED FROM THE BODY, IMMORTAL IN ITS NATURE, AND DESTINED TO EXIST FOREVER?

from the terms used in the Scriptures in speaking of it. We will examine only a few of the most prominent passages on this point. The first mention of the soul is, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul," or a living creature. (Gen. 2:7).

There is no intimation that what God breathed into man had an intelligent and conscious existence previous to its entrance into the body, or that it became such after its entrance into the body. But its entrance into the body made the man a rational and intelligent creature. The

Scriptures call it the spirit, the life. By whatever name it is called, it is evidently nothing more nor less than the principle of life which, before it entered the body, had no conscious and intelligent existence; and after it leaves the body has no conscious and intelligent existence; but, united, makes a rational and accountable being. This is what Paul tells the Athenians, "Seeing he giveth to all life and breath;" (Acts 17:25), and that Jesus refers to when he says, "But are not able to kill the soul;" (Matt. 10:28), and that Solomon designates when he says, "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7).

The breath of life, or the principle of life, that gift of God to man, returns to God who gave it; not as a rational and intelligent existence, but as the principle of life merely. Man cannot destroy it. As Paul says, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3). "When Christ who is our life shall appear" (verse 4) — though our enemies kill this body, yet our life will not be lost, but will be restored to the body in its incorruptible state — "then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (verse 4). "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:25). Though they kill your body, the principle of life returns to God Who gives it. And He will restore it again, though apparently lost, to your incorruptible body; and thus you will keep it unto eternal life. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mar. 8:36,37). The question does not speak of the happiness of the soul, but of the soul itself, as a thing that may be lost or bartered away. The previous verse calls it life; they mean the same thing. If the soul of man were immortal by nature, it could not be lost or exchanged for something less valuable.

3. From the punishment threatened to the ungodly, we should not infer the soul's immortality, but its destruction and extinction. The first penalty held up to Adam previous to the fall was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17). This curse was, after the fall, explained to Adam; "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3:19). No intimation was given to Adam that he was to have an existence beyond the grave. The threatened punishment ended at the grave — sorrow in life, followed by death: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The prospect held up before Adam was that he should go back to the dust where he was taken from, and God would take back the principle of life He had conditionally given to Adam. An extinction of being was the prospect before his mind.

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